

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 15. This sheet, which includes Figure 15, replaces the original sheet including Figure 15.

In Figure 15 the reference numeral 172 is added.

Attachment: one Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

The application has been amended to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

The specification is amended to make an editorial change therein.

A replacement drawing is submitted for Figure 15, adding reference numeral 172 indicating a display window, as disclosed on page 18, lines 14-15. The above change is the only change and is believed not to introduce new matter.

Claims 1-13 were previously pending in the application. New claims 14-20 are added. Therefore, claims 1-20 are presented for consideration.

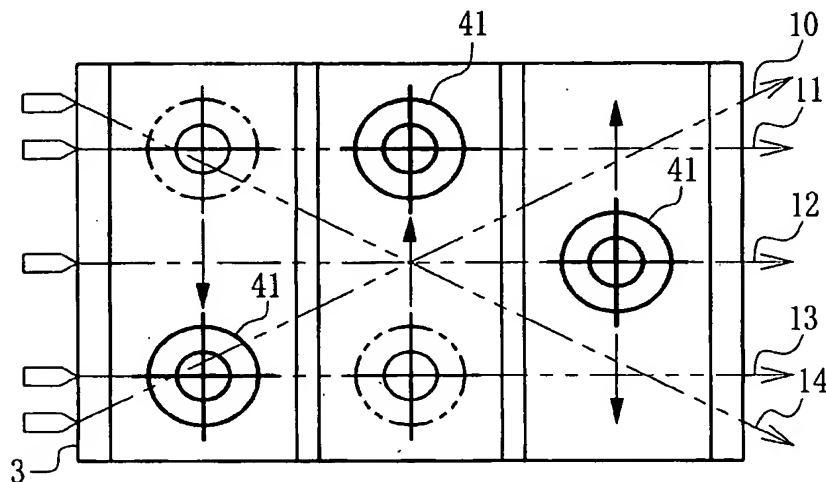
Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as anticipated by INOUE 5,395,111. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a controller for controlling rotation of the plural reel units. The controller controls the first reel to stop after rotating in a normal and a reverse direction repeatedly within a range that a winning symbol is displayed.

By way of example, as seen in Figure 10, reproduced below, and disclosed on page 12, lines 18-29 of the present application, CPU 91 rotates reel 26 in a normal direction until the symbol "target" 41 is displayed on the winning line 13.

Thereafter, the CPU 91 rotates the outer reel 26 in a reverse direction, which is the opposite direction to the normal direction, until the symbol "target" 41 is displayed on the winning line 11. The outer reel 26 carries out the rotation in the normal and in the reverse directions repeatedly.

FIG. 10



Column 3, lines 39-44 of INOUE disclose stepping motors 20a-22a for rotating reels based on clock pulses from CPU 30. This passage discloses that stepping motors 20b-22b are used for rotating inner reels 5b to 7b and that the rotation direction of the stepping motors 20b-22b is opposite to the rotation direction of the stepping motors 20a-22a.

Column 4, line 55 to column 5, line 44, noted in the Official Action, is directed to the alignment of the reels to

determine a single combination data. Neither these passages nor any other passage of INOUE disclose controlling the same reel in a normal and a reverse direction repeatedly.

Rather, as set forth above, one reel of INOUE is rotated in a first direction, and the second reel is rotated in an opposite direction.

As INOUE does not disclose that which is recited, the anticipation rejection is not viable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

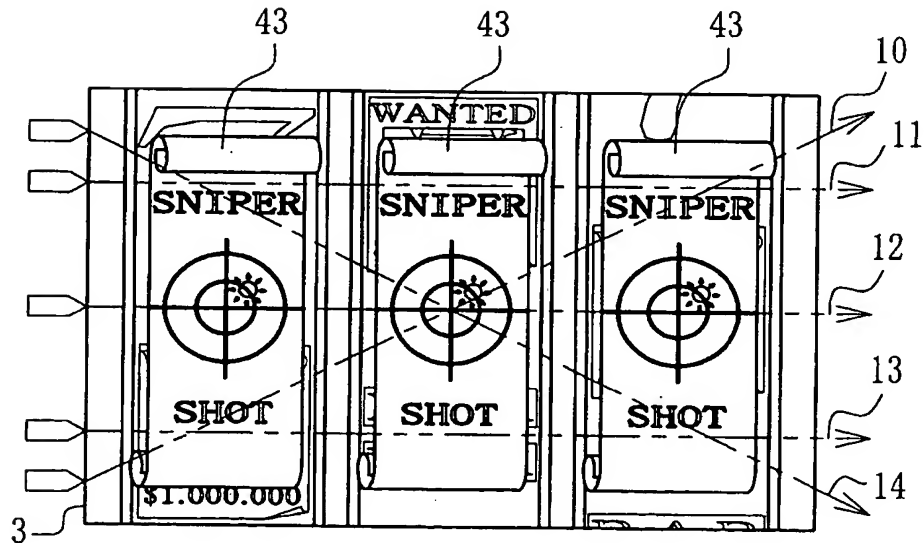
Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and further define the invention and are believed to define over INOUE at least for depending from an allowable independent claim.

In addition, the dependent claims include features not disclosed by INOUE.

Claims 7 and 8 recite a shielding symbol provided on the outer reel that shields a part of a symbol provided in the inner reel.

By way of example, as seen in Figure 13 of the present application, reproduced below, the shield 43 shields or prevents viewing of, for example part of symbol 7 on the inner reel beneath the shielding symbol 43.

FIG. 13



In contrast, Figure 6 of INOUE, noted in the Official Action, shows that the 7 on the inner reel is seen through the star of the upper reel (indicated by the dotted lines). Moreover, as disclosed on column 4, lines 30-34 of INOUE, the symbols on the inner reels 5B to 7B are observed through the outer reels 5a to 7a. INOUE does not disclose a shielding symbol provided on the outer reel that shields a part of the symbol provided on the inner reel.

Claim 9 recites that the outer periphery of the first reel has plural zones. The controller controls the rotation of the first reel such that only one of the plural zones is displayed through the display window.

In contrast, even if the reels of INOUE were divided into plural zones, INOUE rotates an entirety of the reel such that more than one zone is displayed through the display window. INOUE does not disclose only one of the plural zones is displayed through the display window.

Claim 10 recites that the win/loss determining zone consists of a winning symbol and a non-symbol area. The controller rotates the first reel in the normal and reverse directions in a range that only the win/loss determining zone is displayed in the display window.

As set forth above, INOUE does not control a first reel in a normal and a reverse direction. Moreover, INOUE does not control the first reel in a normal and reverse direction in a range that only a win/loss determining zone is displayed in a display window.

Accordingly, claims 7-10 are believed patentable regardless of the patentability of the claims from which they depend.

Independent claim 11 recites a controller for controlling rotation of the plural reel units. The controller controls the first reel to stop after rotating in a normal and a reverse direction repeatedly within a range that the winning symbol is displayed in the display window. The analysis above regarding claim 1 is equally applicable to claim 11. Claims 12-13 depend from claim 11 and further define the invention and are

also believed patentable at least for depending from an allowable independent claim.

In addition, the analysis above regarding claims 9 and 10 is equally applicable to claims 12 and 13.

New claim 14 is written in 35 USC §112, sixth paragraph means-plus-function format and requires that the applied prior art discloses the same structural or an equivalent structure that performs the exact recited function of controlling rotation of the first reel to rotate in a normal and a reverse direction repeatedly as disclosed on page 12, lines 18-29.

As set forth above, INOUE discloses rotating one reel in a first direction and a second reel in an opposite direction. INOUE does not disclose rotating the same reel in a normal direction and a reverse direction repeatedly. Accordingly, claims 14 and 15-20 which depend therefrom, are believed patentable over INOUE.

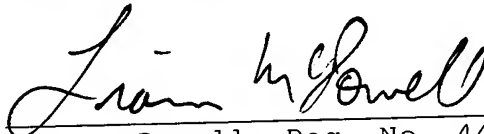
In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional  
fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Liam McDowell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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